

WASHINGTON, D.C. Although he fought to increase the funding levels for military housing, training and other construction needs, U.S. Representative Sanford Bishop says he voted for the \$9.3 billion Military Construction Appropriations Bill passed by Congress because it is “the best deal we could get this year.”

Under the compromise reached by a joint House-Senate conference committee, the final bill to fund military construction projects provides \$120 million more than the earlier versions approved by each chamber and \$199 million more than requested by President Bush. The compromise was passed by Congress Wednesday and sent to the White House to be signed into law.

“While I’m disappointed the final bill reduces funding for military construction by \$1.4 billion from the past fiscal year, this is the best deal we could get this year, and we now need to move forward with the critical projects that it funds,” the Second District Congressman said.

Representative Bishop, a member of the House Appropriations Committee who serves on the Military Construction Subcommittee, backed a proposal that would have added \$1 billion to the bill to address a number of needs, including deficiencies in military housing and training facilities. The proposal, rejected by a majority on the subcommittee, would have provided the additional revenue by trimming this year’s average tax for Americans with incomes above \$1 million a year from \$88,326 to \$83,326.

Among the projects funded in the bill are three at Fort Benning, \$30 million for a multi-purpose training range complex, \$2.85 million for a fire station, and \$1.65 million for an Infantry squad battle course.